

4

10/020,460
T36-141808M/RS

REMARKS

Entry of this Amendment is proper, since it merely narrows the issues on appeal and does not require a further search by the Examiner.

Claims 1-6, 20, 23 and 25-29 are all the claims presently pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended to more particularly define the invention. Claims 8-11, 24 and 30-31 have been canceled.

It is noted that the claim amendments are made only for more particularly pointing out the invention, and not for distinguishing the invention over the prior art, narrowing the claims or for any statutory requirements of patentability. Further, Applicant specifically states that no amendment to any claim herein should be construed as a disclaimer of any interest in or right to an equivalent of any element or feature of the amended claim.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's indication that claim 24 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form. Applicant notes that by this Amendment, claim 24 is canceled and the feature of claim 24 (e.g., "*wherein said metal nitride comprises at least one of Nb, V, Y, and Cr*") has been added to independent claims 1 and 8. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the claims are in condition for immediate allowance.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that claims 1-6, 20, 23 and 25-29, all the claims presently pending in the application, are patentably distinct over the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue at the earliest possible time.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

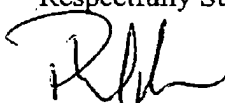
5

10/020,460
T36-141808M/RS

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in fees or to credit any overpayment in fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-0481.

Respectfully Submitted,

Date:

9/7/04

Phillip E. Miller
Reg. No. 46,060

McGinn & Gibb, PLLC
8321 Old Courthouse Road, Suite 200
Vienna, VA 22182-3817
(703) 761-4100
Customer No. 21254

CERTIFICATION OF FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION

I hereby certify that I am filing this 1.116 Amendment by facsimile with the United States Patent and Trademark Office to Examiner S. Crane, Group Art Unit 2811 at fax number (703) 873-9306 this 7th day of September, 2004.



Phillip E. Miller
Reg. No. 46,060